

Friday, June 5, 2015

OU rolls out new LGBTQ Studies minor

Oakland University undergraduate students can now earn a minor in LGBTQ Studies. Coordinated by the Women and Gender Studies program, the minor combines historical, social science, interpersonal and institutional investigations of sexualities, sexual identities and gender identities in U.S. and global contexts. LGBTQ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer or Questioning. The program has been in development for the past several years and recently gained formal approval by the university.

Jo Reger, director of the Women and Gender Studies program, says the minor helps OU keep pace with other universities in terms of program offerings. Currently, universities in Michigan offering some form of LGBTQ or Queer Studies include the University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, Grand Valley State University, Michigan State University and Wayne State University.

“The minor combines well with many programs of study in the university including education, business, health sciences, social sciences, and liberal arts,” said Dr. Reger. “It offers students an opportunity to study not only a changing population but also opens the door to academic inquiry into the ways sex, gender and sexuality shape our world. It is both academic and pragmatic for today’s world.”

A minimum of 20 credits is required for the minor, including three core courses: Introduction to LGBTQ Studies (WGS 303), Queer Social Theory (WGS 404/SOC 404) and Field Experience in Women and Gender Studies (WGS 399). In addition, students must complete two elective courses from the following options:

- WGS 207/SOC 207 – Human Sexuality
- WGS 336/SOC 336 – Sociology of Gender
- WGS 382/EST 582 – Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Education
- WGS 387/COM 387 – Media, Gender and Sexuality

Two of the core courses, WGS 303 and WGS 404/SOC 404, will be offered in fall 2015 and the electives are offered throughout the year.

“This is a well-rounded course of study,” Dr. Reger said. “The minor allows students to get an overview of LGBTQ Studies, an introduction to the theoretical frameworks arising from Queer Studies and hands-on experience in the community through internships.”

For more information, visit the [website](#) or contact the Women and Gender Studies office at (248) 370-2154.

Dr. Reger named editor of esteemed academic journal

Dr. Reger, a professor of Sociology, also has been selected as editor of “Gender & Society,” a top-ranked, peer-reviewed journal in the fields of sociology and women studies. The journal is ranked second for Women’s Studies journals and 16th for Sociology journals. According to the [website](#), the journal was founded in 1987 “as an outlet for feminist social science.” It is the official journal for Sociologists for Women in Society and publishes articles that expand and contribute to the study of gender.

According to Dr. Reger, “Gender & Society” is not only known for its research, but also for the ways it mentors young scholars through the peer review process. She said, “The journal is highly sought after by academics seeking to publish in the field. We receive approximately 600 manuscripts a year and will only be able to publish about 7 percent.”



Sociology professors Jo Reger and George Sanders will teach courses in OU's new LGBTQ Studies minor.

Three other OU faculty members will serve as managing editors of the journal. They are Linda Gjokaj (Sociology), Elizabeth Paré (Sociology), and Lacey Story (Women and Gender Studies).

Dr. Reger started her position as editor in May and will continue to be editor for four years. The first issue edited by Oakland staff will be published in February 2016 and will feature cover art by artist and OU professor Andrea Eis (Cinema Studies).